

GEORGE WILLIS.

[To accompany bill H. R. No. 54.]

FEBRUARY 29, 1840.

Mr. HABERSHAM, from the Committee on Commerce, made the following

REPORT:

The Committee on Commerce, to whom was referred the petition of George Willis, of the county of Carteret, State of North Carolina, have had the same under consideration, and concur in the report of the Committee on Commerce, made on the 6th day of February, 1839, and recommend the passage of the bill then reported, for the relief of the petitioner.

FEBRUARY 6, 1839.

The Committee on Commerce, to whom was referred the petition of George Willis, have had the same under consideration, and report as follows :

The petitioner, George Willis, states that he is now 72 years of age; that his principal means of support for a large family is derived from his exertions in piloting; that in October last the United States cutter Campbell, Captain N. L. Coste, hove in sight, and was boarded by petitioner, to pilot her in safety through Ocracoke; that a severe gale arose, and the captain ordered the pilot-boat to be cut loose, as she was stove, and about to sink; stating at the same time that ample compensation should be made to the petitioner. He further states that no compensation has been made him for said boat, oars, &c., and he is thereby divested of his customary means of support for his family. He prays Congress to allow him the sum of one hundred and twenty dollars for said boat. The petitioner is earnestly joined by a number of persons about Ocracoke, who recommend him as a reputable man. He and his case are highly recommended by S. Brown, of Portsmouth. Two other pilots of the same district, Timothy Willis and Benjamin D. Bragg, swear that they were also employed by Captain Coste to assist in piloting in the cutter, about the middle of October, 1837, with Robert Styson; and, during their exertions in a severe storm and heavy sea to save the cutter, the boat of George Willis was run over, and broken to pieces; cut loose, by order of the captain, and drifted off, and was totally lost. They further state that the boat, sails, oars, &c., were worth fully eighty dollars, and to the owner a larger sum,

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as she was his main dependance for supporting his family. A letter from Captain Coste to Silvester Brown, Esq., mentions the loss of this boat, and says the old man ought to be paid for her.

The committee, from the above facts, considering the service rendered by the petitioner as service rendered to the Government, and his loss sustained in his boat occasioned solely by his attempt to save the property of the Government, have come to the conclusion that his claim is founded in equity, and therefore report a bill for his relief.

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